

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



d. Planning and Sustainability Division

MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Anna Chamberlin
Neighborhood Planning Manager 

DATE: October 10, 2018

SUBJECT: **BZA Case No. 19823** - 3920 Alton Place NW (Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church)

APPLICATION

Wisconsin Avenue Baptist Church (the "Applicant"), pursuant to Title 11 (2016 Zoning Regulations) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), Subtitle X, Chapter 9, requests special exceptions under the use requirements of Subtitle U § 203.1(f), and under Subtitle C § 1402 from the retaining wall requirements of Subtitle C § 1401.3(c). In addition, pursuant to Subtitle X, Chapter 10, the Applicant requests variances from the height limitations of Subtitle D § 303.1, from the lot occupancy requirements of Subtitle D § 304.1, and from the side yard requirements of Subtitle D § 307.1.

The requested relief and exceptions are proposed to facilitate the redevelopment of the existing 350-seat church and 56-student daycare facility to a 250-seat church and 85-unit continuing care retirement facility. The site is located in the R-1-B Zone at 3920 Alton Place NW (Square 1779, Lot 14).

SUMMARY OF DDOT REVIEW

The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is committed to achieve an exceptional quality of life in the nation's capital by encouraging sustainable travel practices, safer streets, and outstanding access to goods and services. As one means to achieve this vision, DDOT works through the zoning process to ensure that impacts from new developments are manageable within and take advantage of the District's multi-modal transportation network.

The purpose of DDOT's review is to assess the potential safety and capacity impacts of the proposed action on the District's transportation network and, as necessary, propose mitigations that are commensurate with the action. After an extensive review of the case materials submitted by the Applicant, DDOT finds:

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- The Applicant's trip generation analysis anticipates that the proposal will reduce the site's demand on the District's transportation network when compared to the the site's existing church and daycare;
- The church and continuing care facility are proposed to share a two-level below-grade garage containing 66 vehicle parking spaces and 30 long-term bicycle parking spaces, meeting the site's ZR16 requirements. 12 short-term bicycle parking spaces will be located in within 120 feet of the building's entrances;
- The Applicant proposes to meet its loading requirements by supplying a 20-foot long service and delivery space internal to the garage and a 30-foot loading berth parallel to the site's proposed driveway (see Figure 1). The design of the site allows all backing maneuvers to occur within private space. The Applicant has also proposed a Loading Management Plan (LMP) to help facilitate trucks to and from the site;
- The Applicant proposes a minimal Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan, consistent with the proposed uses and the minimal impact expected on the District's transportation network; and
- The Applicant has coordinated with the community on the three (3) potential improvements to the District's transportation network, including:
 - the implementation of an all-way stop at 39th Street NW and Wisconsin Street NW;
 - the installation of "Do Not Block the Box" pavement markings and signage at Nebraska Avenue NW and Alton Place NW; and
 - increased pedestrian crossing time for the east-west crossing over Nebraska Avenue NW just north of Tenley Circle NW.
- These improvements are not required by DDOT based on the project's impacts, but may be applied for by the Applicant through the District's public space permitting process following coordination with DDOT's Traffic Operations and Safety Division (TOSD). DDOT notes that signal timings are updated comprehensively and will be made through existing processes.

RECOMMENDATION

DDOT has reviewed the application materials and has determined that the proposed action will not have adverse impacts on the District's transportation network. DDOT has no objection to the approval of this application on the condition that the Applicant implement the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan and Loading Management Plan (LMP) as proposed in the October 8, 2018 Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) study prepared by Gorove/Slade Associates.

CONTINUED COORDINATION

Based on the complexity of the zoning action, the Applicant should continue to coordinate with DDOT on the following issues:

- DDOT is willing to consider two (2) of the improvements proposed by the Applicant based on community coordination. The Applicant should submit signage and marking plans through the Transportation Online Permitting System (TOPS) for review, to include:
 - An all-way-stop control at the intersection of 39th Street NW and Alton Place NW; and
 - "Do Not Block Intersection" markings and signs at the intersection of Nebraska Avenue NW and Alton Place NW.

- Continue to coordinate with DDOT through the public space permitting process to ensure that the landscape island on Alton Place NW is extended to the maximum intent possible (see Figure 2);
- Continue to coordinate with DDOT on the design of the public space, including the area adjacent to the National Park Service property fronting Nebraska Avenue NW; and
- Submit a formal request for DDOT review of the pedestrian crossing time at Nebraska Avenue NW.

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS

Site Design and Access

The entrance to the assisted living community is proposed to front Alton Place NW, while the main entrance to the church will be on the south side of the building on Yuma Street NW. Vehicles will enter the site on Alton Place NW and enter the site's below grade garage. Vehicles exiting the site will turn south out of the garage and will exit onto Yuma Street NW. A 12-foot by 30-foot loading berth is located parallel to driveway, allowing trucks to enter the site onto Alton Place NW, back into the loading area, and proceed head-out on Yuma Street NW.

The site also includes a one-way circular driveway on Alton Place NW. DDOT typically prefers to allow only one curb cut per building in order to reduce pedestrian and vehicle conflicts and improve pedestrians' experience within public space. In this case, the Applicant has justified its proposal, citing the need for rapid access for emergency vehicles and shorter walking distances for the continuing care facility's residents. Additionally, the Applicant has designed the driveway to DDOT standards. The driveway maintains more than 60 feet from the closest intersection at Nebraska Avenue NW and Alton Place NW and the entirety of the drive aisle is located on private property. The aisle is also proposed to be 12 feet wide, which is narrow enough to inhibit vehicle parking. The western curb cut on the site exceeds DDOT standards for one-way access, but has been designed in a manner to accommodate the turning sweep of the anticipated operator's shuttle bus. The Applicant has agreed to revise the circular driveway's island to add additional landscaped space and will coordinate further with DDOT on the design of the curb cut during the public space permitting process (See Figure 2). The proposed site plan is shown in Figure 1 below.

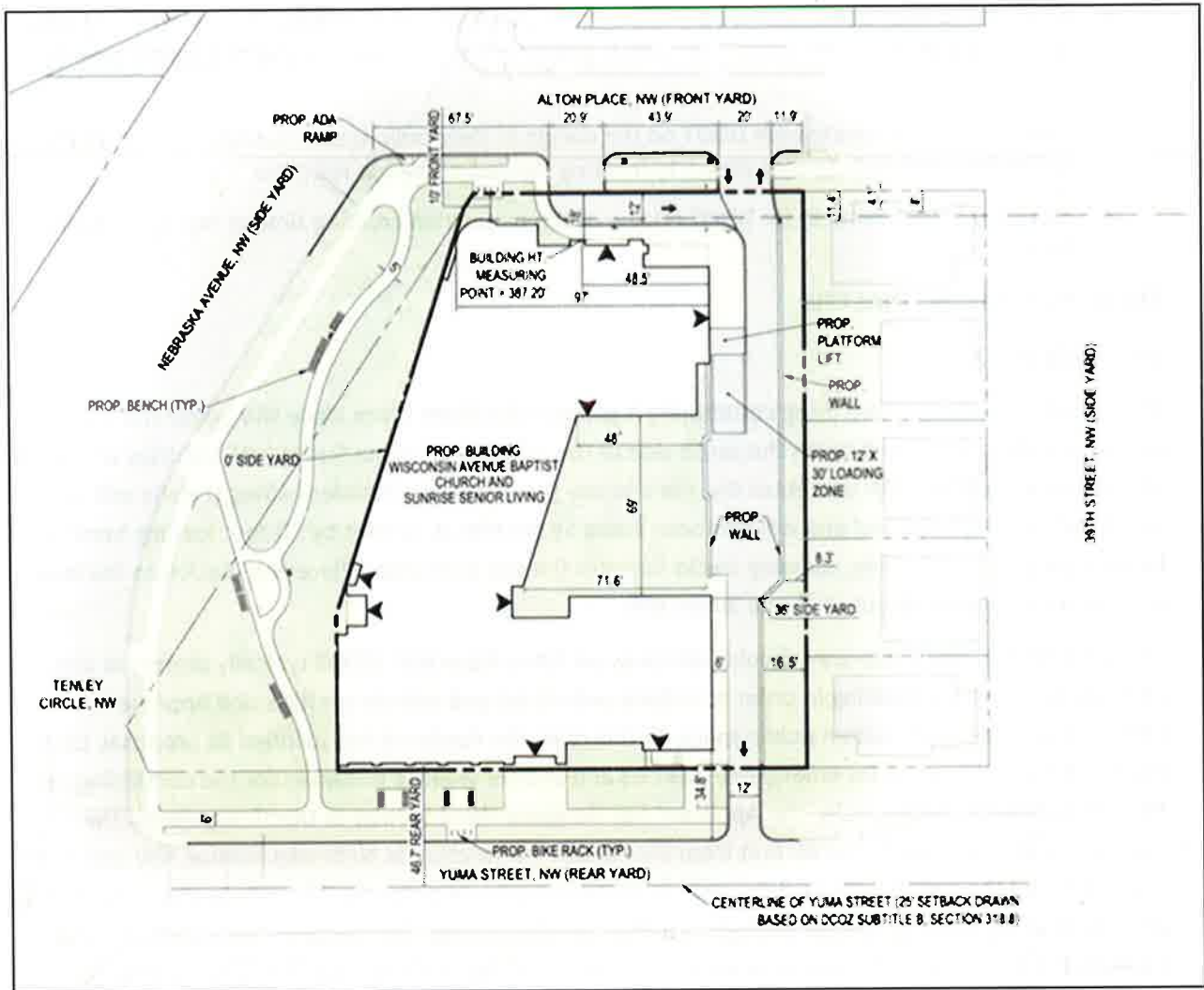


Figure 1 – Site Plan (Source: Applicant’s Architectural Plans and Elevations, Exhibit 6A1, dated June 14, 2018)

Trip Generation

Because the Applicant proposes to replace an existing church and daycare use, DDOT scoped a Comprehensive Transportation Study (CTR) with the Applicant to determine the net impacts of the proposed development. The Applicant used employee census data to determine mode split assumptions for the existing uses on the site, as shown in Table 1 below.

Land Use	Mode			
	Drive	Transit	Bike	Walk
Daycare	65%	0%	0%	35%
Church	60%	36%	2%	2%

Table 1 – Assumed Mode Split of Existing Uses (Source: Applicant’s CTR, dated August 24, 2018)

The Applicant applied the mode splits to trip generation assumptions generated by using the Institute of Transportation Engineers *Trip Generation Manual*, supplemented by observations at two (2) existing regional sites managed by the site’s anticipated operator. Data was captured on both a Thursday and Sunday to account for potentially overlapping high-demand periods between the proposed church and continuing care facility. Table 2 illustrates the net impact of the proposed development during typical

morning, evening, and Sunday peak periods. Assuming the existing church and daycare are utilized at least at average capacity, the subject site is not anticipated to increase demand on the District's vehicular transportation network during peak hours.

Mode	Land Use	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Sunday Peak Hour		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing (veh/hr)	Church (350 seats)	1	1	2	3	4	7	47	48	95
	Daycare (56 students)	16	14	30	14	15	29	2	2	4
Proposed (veh/hr)	Church (250 seats)	1	1	2	2	2	4	34	34	68
	Assisted Living (85 units)	10	6	16	5	10	15	11	6	16
	Net Vehicular Trips	-6	-8	-14	-10	-7	-17	-4	-10	-15

Table 2 – Assumed Mode Split of Existing Uses (Source: Applicant's CTR, dated August 24, 2018)

Roadway Capacity and Operations

While the Applicant was not required to complete a vehicular capacity analysis based on the proposal's anticipated impacts, the Applicant coordinated with the community on traffic and pedestrian safety within the vicinity of the site. The community noted interest in three (3) potential improvements, and the Applicant has agreed to fund and implement each subject to DDOT's review and approval. The proposed improvements include:

- implementing an all-way-stop control at the intersection of 39th Street NW and Alton Place NW;
- adding "Do Not Block Intersection" markings and signs at the intersection of Nebraska Avenue NW and Alton Place NW; and
- increasing pedestrian crossing time over Nebraska Avenue NW on the western side of the site.

DDOT is open to further discussion with the Applicant on the potential study and implement an all-way stop at 39th Street NW and Alton Place NW, as well as the add "Do Not Block the Intersection" markings at Nebraska Avenue NW and Alton Place NW. Signage and marking plans for these improvements should be provided to DDOT through TOPS during the public space permitting process for DDOT's consideration and review.

In regard to the signal timing at Nebraska Avenue, DDOT reviews signal timing comprehensively to best optimize capacity for all modes. Potential changes to timing will be addressed through DDOT's standard signal-timing review process.

Vehicle Parking

Continuing care facilities are subject to the multifamily housing vehicle parking requirements of Subtitle C § 701.5. Because the site is located in an R zone, the Applicant's CTR states that the site is required to provide a total of 41 vehicle parking spaces for the continuing care facility based on a ratio of one (1) space per every two (2) units in excess of proposal's fourth unit. The zoning table of § 701.5 also notes that assisted care units are required to provide a total of one (1) space per every six (6) assisted care units. Because the table does not specify which ratio should be applied in cases when a continuing care facility is proposed within an R zone, DDOT supports the Applicant's interpretation of the site's zoning requirement.

For the church use, the Applicant is required to provide a total of 25 vehicle parking spaces, for a total of 66 off-street spaces. The spaces will be located in a two-level below grade garage accessible from a driveway located on Alton Place NW.

The Applicant's CTR provides a shared parking analysis to assess whether the supply is sufficient during periods of overlapping demand for the two (2) proposed uses. The analysis uses data from the Institute of Transportation Engineers *Parking Generation*, observations at two (2) other regional continuing care facilities managed by the site's anticipated operator, and data observations from the existing church. The shared parking analysis suggests that the parking supply is sufficient to meet parking demand on typical weekday and Sunday morning peak hours. At the busiest hour on Sunday, the Applicant anticipates that the garage will have a surplus of approximately eight (8) vehicle parking spaces.

Bicycle Parking

Per Subtitle C § 802.1, the Applicant is required to provide 30 long-term and 12 short-term bicycle parking spaces. The Applicant proposes to locate the long-term spaces on the first level of the below grade garage. The short-term spaces will be supplied through the provision of six (6) inverted U-racks within public space or on private property within 120 feet of site entrances.

Loading and Trash Collection

The site is anticipated to have between 16 and 19 deliveries and trash collections per week, which will mainly serve the proposed continuing care use. Per Subtitle C § 901.1, the Applicant is required to provide one (1) 30-foot long loading berth with an associated loading platform and one (1) 20-foot long service and delivery space. The Applicant proposes to provide the service and delivery space in the below-grade garage. A 30-foot loading area is proposed parallel to the site's driveway, which spans the extent of site from Alton Place NW to Yuma Street NW. The design of the loading facility allows all backing maneuvers to occur on private property. Trucks will pull into the driveway on Alton Place NW head-in, pull past the loading area in the driveway and back-in, and then depart onto Yuma Street NW head-out. In the revised CTR, dated October 8, 2018, the Applicant has proposed implementing a loading management plan (LMP). DDOT finds this plan acceptable for the anticipated loading needs of the site.

Transportation Demand Management

The Applicant has proposed a minimal TDM plan, which is acceptable based on the proposed uses and their anticipated impact. The Applicant proposes to identify TDM leaders who will work with goDCgo to implement measures proposed by the development. These include the provision of the required bicycle parking facilities and the installation of a transportation information center display, which will contain materials related to local transportation alternatives. In the revised CTR, dated October 8, 2018, the Applicant has also proposed to direct site visitors to alternative locations of vehicle parking and not in residential parking spaces.

PUBLIC SPACE

DDOT's recommendation is not an approval of the project's public space design elements. Elements of the project in public space, including the proposed curb cuts, bicycle racks, sidewalks, and leadwalks require approval through the District's public space permitting process.

DDOT notes that the Applicant has agreed to coordinate further on the design of the circular driveway's western curb cut. A conceptual drawing of a potential revision follows in Figure 2 below. As shown in the diagram, additional landscaping on the eastern side of the curb cut will require the Applicant to increase

the radius on the western side, or shuttles will need to swing into the opposing travel lane in order to make the turn. The design will be further assessed during the public space permitting process.

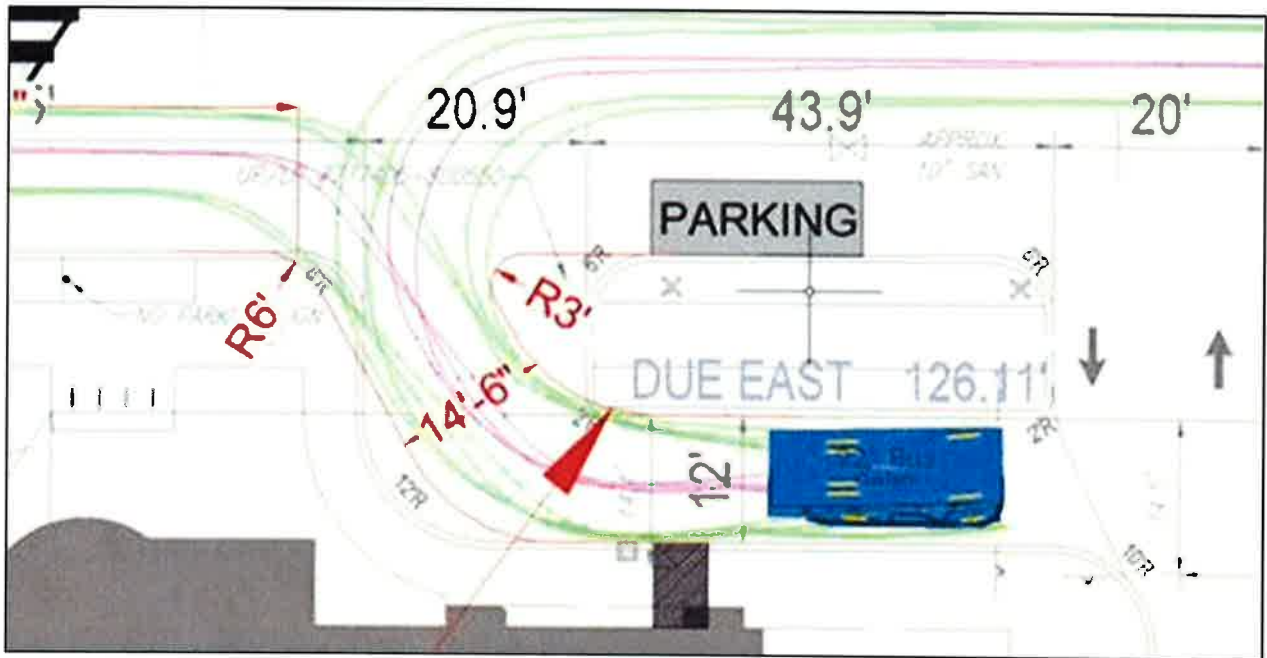


Figure 2 – Western Curb Cut Evaluation (Source: Gorove/Slade Associates, Inc.)

The Applicant should refer to Titles 11, 12A and 24 of the DCMR and the most recent versions of DDOT's Design and Engineering Manual and Public Realm Design Manual for public space design guidance.

AC:pr

